

# REVIEWS

***Buddhism, Legitimation and Conflict : The Political Functions of Urban Thai Buddhism.***  
PETER JACKSON. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore. 1989. 245 pp.

After his impressive analysis of Buddhadasa's innovative reinterpretation of traditional Buddhist teaching in *Buddhadasa: A Buddhist Thinker for the Modern World*, reviewed in Volume 76 *JSS*, 1988, Dr. Jackson now expands his intellectual horizons to focus on urban Thai Buddhism in its many manifestations and the political implications involved therein. Dr. Jackson, with the publication of his second book now under review, clearly establishes himself as a charter member of the select academic fraternity specializing in the interaction between Buddhism and politics in Thailand. Thai scholarship in this field of study is a relatively recent phenomenon. Dr. Jackson understandably builds on the foundations laid down by such eminent Thai scholars as Somboon Suksamran and Sulak Sivaraksa. However, Dr. Jackson has quoted liberally from the somewhat polemical writings of non-academic Krajaang Nanthapho while neglecting the more scholarly works of Nithi Eawsriwong, Sombat Chanthornwong, Thirachon, and Khanyngnit Canthabut. Dr. Jackson also draws on the limited core of foreign scholars working in this general field of studies including Charles Keyes, Gehan Wijeyewardene and Stanley Tambiah. Thomas Kirsch has done some interesting work on Buddhist cults which Jackson might profitably have perused. While the author's knowledge and use of Thai sources is impressive, one cannot help but question why he did not rely more on personal interviews and less on secondary source material. If he did pursue such primary source material, he does not so indicate.

Dr. Jackson, in the book under review, provides us with an intellectually challenging and provocative analysis of the structural relationship between the State and the Sangha over time and the teachings and practice of charismatic urban monks and the aspirations and expectations of their key audiences. The author, with commendable ingenuity, develops a socio-political paradigm in which the conflict and tensions resulting from pressures brought to bear on the establishment by an emergent middle class find their mirror image in the Buddhist world. There, a similar struggle is being played out between rationalist inspired Buddhist movements seeking not only a more democratic administration of Sangha affairs and State Government but meaningful spiritual attainment and salvation for lay as well as monk aspirants, and a conservative Sangha elite favoring highly centralized Sangha and State administrative structures and focusing on lay performance of merit in support of a Sangha seeking enlightenment. Dr. Jackson sees rationalist Buddhist movements, as represented by the reformist Buddhadasa, Panyananta, Photirak and Thepvethi, and the traditional conservative oriented movements of such monks as Kittivutho and Anan Senakhan as basically representing the goals and aspirations of their respective lay adherents, i.e., middle class political dissent against the authoritarian bias and political control by an aristocracy in alliance with military and bureaucratic elites.

Dr. Jackson clearly posits the functional role of Buddhism as legitimizing political authority. He joins other scholars in pointing out how traditionally metaphysical Buddhism with its inherent hierarchical modeling has been effectively used and manipulated by authoritarian governments to sanction their political control. Where Jackson breaks new ground is in drawing the

readers' attention to a more assertive middle class similarly drawing on rationalist reform-oriented Buddhism to legitimize their own right to vie for political power and to validate their economic goals.

Dr. Jackson indicates how the Sangha Acts of 1902, 1941 and 1962 clearly expressed the political interests of those in control of state authority. The 1902 and 1962 Sangha Acts provided for a centralized Sangha authority under the absolutist control of the Sangharaja and Council of Elders. The 1941 Sangha Act represented an effort to decentralize Sangha administrative authority. While it is true that Prime Minister Pibul Songkram was enamoured of democratic forms, if not content, he was, nevertheless, no less authoritarian in his rule or mind-set than Prime Minister Sarit. The rationale behind the promulgation of 1941 lies elsewhere and is explored in some detail by Dr. Jackson.

The author gives the most detailed analysis available in English of Dhammayut and Mahanikai sectarian rivalries. This subject is a sensitive one, and both the Thai government and the Sangha authorities have discouraged academic research on it as creating dissension in society and thus being detrimental to national security. Dr. Jackson views the conflict and tension between the sects basically in the framework of democratic versus authoritarian mind-sets relating to both internal Sangha administration and the political structure of the State. The saga of the controversial monk Phra Bimoladharm, so much a part of this sectarian warfare, is described in much detail. Dr. Jackson, however, omits discussion of Phra Bimoladharm's affiliation with and involvement in the Moral Rearmament Movement which served to foster suspicions of his political inclinations, and his identification with Burmese ecclesiastical authorities and their projects re-

lating to compilation of Buddhist texts which also led to questioning of his loyalties. While Dr. Jackson does touch on personal rivalries in discussing the internecine sectarian warfare, more consideration might have been given to the manoeuvring for positions of power within the Sangha and personal antagonisms as reasons for conflict. It would have been interesting if Dr. Jackson had explored the history of Dhammayut-Mahanikai relations and rivalry in Laos. Vientiane authorities tended to view the introduction of and continued existence of the Dhammayut sect in Laos as a function of Thai imperialism, and it is of some interest to note that one of the first acts of the Lao government after the communist takeover in 1975 was the abolition of the Dhammayut sect. It is of interest that Phra Bimoladharma had a large following in Laos as well as the Northeast of Thailand and became a symbol of Isan nationalism. The establishment's fear of and frustration with this monk should, thus, also be seen in the context of traditional center-periphery conflicts combined with the perception of an Isan and its opposition politicians receptive to Lao irredentist designs. Sectarian rivalries might also be viewed in a rural versus urban context with the inevitable attendant stereotypes.

Dr. Jackson pays special attention to a detailed exposition of the religious thought and practice of various urban Buddhist movements mentioned above. He also provides a most informative analysis of the different meditation techniques used by the reformist and establishment aligned movements: insight meditation versus concentration meditation, respectively. While basically these movements fall either into a rationalist, reformist, democratic oriented mold or a traditional, authoritarian, hierarchical model, Dr. Jackson does point up the logical inconsistencies inherent in these movements and deviations from the theoretical design he has so artfully constructed. The lay audiences of these movements are described, noting, for example, the different sections of the middle class represented by

the followers of Buddhadasa and Photirak. Jackson, in his balanced, but, nevertheless, somewhat sympathetic, account of the Santi-Asoke movement and its leader Phra Photirak, fails to mention Phra Photirak's public declaration of his having attained an exalted state of spiritual attainment and thus the status of a Bodhisatva. Such a public declaration is forbidden under Buddhist doctrine and is against the vinaya. It is subsumed under parajika, being one of the four most serious violations against the vinaya. Phra Photirak has also been accused of manipulating Buddhist religious teachings in the effort to defend himself against the above accusation. Thus, it is not valid to define the legal issue relating to Phra Photirak, as Jackson does, as one of determining the status of a monk by either abidance by the vinaya or compliance with the procedures of secular law. The Phra Dhammakaya movement, combining both rationalist and traditionalist elements, and its appeal to the Thai "Yuppie generation" is described. Dr. Jackson sees these various movements as less a response to an educated middle class being disillusioned by a lax urban Sangha prone to material attachments and rewards and the seeming irrelevance of ritualistic Buddhism, and more as a means of validating middle class values through a reinterpreted Buddhism and seeking the legitimization of political dissent for some and the co-optation into the power elite for others.

Dr. Jackson elucidates the "plague on both your houses" of the rationalist Buddhist movements as they decry both the metaphysical Buddhism of an elite establishment steeped in hierarchical values and the merit, sin, karma, rebirth orientation of rural Buddhism. These rationalist movements stress the viability of individual salvation here and now for lay adherents as well as monks. Frugality, self-discipline, rational orderliness and spiritually imbued economic activity are emphasized. Thus, there is an alternative symbolic and theoretical system created to serve the interests of an emergent commercially oriented middle class rather than the interests of

an aristocratic/bureaucratic elite authoritarian establishment.

Dr. Jackson's alternative rationalist urban Buddhist model might be profitably juxtaposed with the "development monk" movement in the rural north and northeast of Thailand. This Buddhist inspired development model for rural Thailand is an alternative to the economic growth model imposed by a centralized bureaucracy. The Sangha initiated rural based movement focuses on the union of spiritual and material development, both in theory and practice, and emphasizes self-sufficiency, moderation, frugality, appropriate technology, integrated farming and mutual help and cooperative patterns of behavior. The "development monks" have offered an alternative system responsive to village specific conditions and needs and one that serves and is responsive to both the material and spiritual needs of an impoverished rural population. This movement involves a socially conscious and involved Sangha seeking their salvation through spiritually infused community development activities freed from the burden of self-centeredness. Interestingly enough, such role play for the Sangha is denied by Buddhadasa. Yet, like Buddhadasa's movement, the alternative development model of the reformist rural monks is democratically oriented based on villager participation in the planning and implementation of development activities with the guidance and support of monk leaders. This rural movement reacts against centralized authority and is often interpreted as a focus for dissent against and opposition to authority. Development monks, like Jackson's rationalist Buddhist movement leaders, have likewise been accused of being communists or communist sympathizers.

There are interesting parallels between the village specific community development programs of the "development monks" and the government inspired civic oriented Sangha programs such as Dhammathud and Dhammacarik on the one hand and the rationalist versus traditionalist urban movements described by Jackson on the other.

It would be of much profit if Dr. Jackson would next apply his excellent scholarship and intellectual ingenuity to a study of rural Thai Buddhism.

Just as a study of rural Buddhist movements in Thailand would have provided illuminating dimensions to Dr. Jackson's analysis of urban Buddhism, an examination of evangelical, born again religious movements, and the activities of "liberation theology" monks on the international stage would also have provided additional valued perspective.

Despite certain errors of both omission and commission, Dr. Jackson has made a most valuable contribution to existing scholarship on the interaction of Buddhism and politics. With exemplary scholarship and a wealth of detail hitherto unavailable in English, Dr. Jackson has delved into the mysteries of the political dimensions of Thai Buddhism through careful examination of the symbiotic relationship of the state and establishment Buddhism; sectarian conflict; Buddhist reform movements and their particularistic religious thought and practice and composition of their lay audiences. Dr. Jackson has developed an intriguing theoretical framework which enables us to better understand issues of legitimation and conflict. While there are obvious difficulties, recognized by Dr. Jackson as well, in fitting all his data into his theoretical construct, Dr. Jackson has performed a valuable service in providing us with new insights into the functional role play of Buddhism. Scholars in this somewhat arcane field of study will be in Dr. Jackson's debt for years to come, and the book under review will certainly serve as a provocative point of departure for future academic analysis by both Thai and western scholarship.

The publisher, the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore is to be commended for its encouragement of such research as that represented by Dr. Jackson's latest book under its "Social Issues in Southeast Asia" program. If future research works in this program, focusing on issues of religion and eth-

nicity, maintain the high academic standard exemplified by Dr. Jackson, the academic community will continue to be deeply indebted to ISEAS.

WILLIAM J. KLAUSNER

*Chulalongkorn University*

*Selected Papers on Comparative Tai Studies by William J. Gedney.* Edited by ROBERT J. BICKNER, JOHN HARTMAN, and PATCHARIN PEYASANTIWONG. Michigan Papers on South and Southeast Asia No. 29, Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. 1989. 554 pp.

For many years the work of William J. Gedney in comparative and historical Tai, while widely recognized by everyone in the field, has been limited in distribution to a relatively few published articles, and a number of papers circulated at academic conferences. Thus it is indeed gratifying to learn that this volume of Gedney's writings has at last been made available. In the editors' brief preface it is made clear that the quality of Gedney's work is a tribute to his long and distinguished association with the mainstream of American linguistic scholarship, the descriptive and analytical conventions of which underlie his approaches to the problems of comparative Tai.

As with all of Gedney's writing, the papers contained in this volume are prudent and devote considerable space to suggestions for additional study. Indeed if any criticism could be directed at Gedney's analytical work, it would be that it is overly circumspect and often inconclusive. Such an observation is perhaps unwarranted, however, because this particular characteristic of Gedney's writing has served as a source of inspiration to his students and epigones, ever eager to solve the puzzles which Gedney proposes.

In terms of the present volume, we are unfortunately not informed by the editors by what criteria Gedney selected the writings which appear, nor how the ordering of the papers was determined. In the case of the latter, there seems to

be neither rhyme nor reason; the subject matter has no continuity and the articles are not presented chronologically. This is a minor point, but a sequential or chronological ordering would have enhanced the book with a historical coherence useful to those less familiar with the field of comparative Tai.

Of greater concern, however, is the omission of several important Gedney contributions. There is a lack of either data oriented papers or descriptive work on the Central languages, a disconcerting exclusion for those linguists who recognize the importance of Gedney's contributions to the study of these dialects. Many Central forms are cited in the other papers, but even the important analytical insights on Central dialect diversity which Gedney discusses in his review of Brown (1965) and in a paper presented to the Linguistic Society of America (1966) entitled "Linguistic diversity among the Tai dialects in southern Kwangsi," have not been included. These ellipses are quite unjustifiable, unless we should be informed that a second volume is forthcoming. Regrettably, no clues are offered as to the fate of these works nor to the remainder of Gedney's as yet unpublished materials.

The selection of writings which were included consists of fourteen articles which fall roughly into the categories of didacticism, synchronic descriptions, diachronic analyses, presentations of lexical data, and Thai literature. I say roughly because there is naturally much overlap and these heuristic terms are by no means discrete.

Into the didactic category I would place the two articles entitled "Future directions in comparative Tai linguistics," and "A checklist for determining tones in Tai." The first and more important of these takes the form of a set of fifteen questions which have occurred to Gedney in the course of his research to which he proposes answers or approaches through which answers might be sought. This work, the closest to a propaedeutic that he has ever produced, has been circulated in unpublished form now for many years and is well known to his students. It has always seemed to me curious that this particular format was chosen in which to discuss the most basic elements of comparative Tai such as the reconstruction of Proto-Tai (PT)

initial consonants, the PT vocalic system, the PT tonal system, and questions of genetic relationships both external and internal. These are, after all, the fundamentals of the discipline, and the tentative, question-and-answer structure of the discourse reveals a hesitancy and unwillingness to commit that is certainly unnecessary for a scholar of Gedney's stature. It is only when we consider, those of us who know him as a teacher, Gedney's devotion to his role as professor, that the style of this particular piece becomes intelligible and more stimulating in its effect.

In addition to the more basic questions in this paper, several interesting peripheral issues are addressed. For example, "What is the source of final -l in Saek?" (p. 73). The suggested answer to this is the possibility of its having been borrowed at some point as an areal feature in Sam Neua, because final -l has been observed there in free variation with final -n in Red Tai and Neua. The basis for the association of Saek with Sam Neua is the change of the PT vowel+ high back unrounded glide /aÿ/ to /ëë/. Here I think it would be wise to point out that a large number of Tai dialects spoken in Khammouan, Xieng Khwang, Nghê An, and Thanh Hóa provinces have also made this change and thus this particular suggestion leaves some room for doubt. Indeed, Gedney himself characterizes this change as an areal feature later in the same paper (p. 97).

Perhaps a more fruitful *modus operandi* would be to examine the lexicons of nearby Austroasiatic languages that do regularly possess final /-l/ and with which Saek speakers were surely in close, presumably symbiotic, contact (although Gedney denies this possibility in the Saek article, p. 396). I highly suspect that the original Saek speakers in Khammouan were even bilingual in So or Phong or perhaps one of the Muang dialects known to exist in that province. A very cursory comparison of Saek words with final /-l/ with a short So word list (NTM n.d.) reveals the following similarities:

English	Thai	Saek	So
wasp	tEEen <sup>1</sup>	thiil <sup>4</sup>	tEEl ('a stinger')
to sow	waan <sup>5</sup>	vaal <sup>6</sup>	?apual ('to toss underhand')
slack	yaan <sup>1</sup>	yaal <sup>4</sup>	nEl ('to swing on something')
earthworm	dian <sup>1</sup>	trual <sup>1</sup>	tīl ('fatty crabs or snails')
hammer	khOOon <sup>4</sup>	gOOl <sup>6</sup>	? akal ('wooden mallet')
hot	rOOon <sup>4</sup>	ruul <sup>6</sup>	huul ('steam from rice')
hard	kEn <sup>2</sup>	keel <sup>6</sup>	kool ('stone')
stone	hin <sup>5</sup>	riil <sup>1</sup>	" (?)
to fly	bin <sup>1</sup>	bil <sup>1</sup>	par, pīr
to crow	khan <sup>5</sup>	hal <sup>2</sup>	cikar
to snore	kron <sup>1</sup>	tīel	cicoor ('to groan')

These are obviously just possibilities, but in multilingual environments, such as that of the home of the Saek in Khammouan, a good deal of transference and reinforcement should be expected. It should also be mentioned that the So corpus used here, the only one available to me, is not extensive, but similar matches of Saek final /-n/ with So final /-l/ were not apparent.

There is also another possibility suggested by the data now available for Laha (Soviet Academy of Science 1986) which is spoken in Vietnam in several locations, including So'n La Province around Phu Yên (Muang Vat) not far to the northwest of Sam Neua Province in Laos and thus not out of keeping with Gedney's original suggestion. Laha also has final /-l/ in several lexical items which appear to be cognate with Saek:

English	Saek	Laha
sweet	vaal <sup>2</sup>	tho'l <sup>6</sup>
snore	tīel <sup>1</sup>	kal <sup>3</sup>
classifier, long thin objects	sEl <sup>3</sup>	hal <sup>5</sup> (clf. books, etc)
clf., things	?al <sup>1</sup>	
stone	riil <sup>1</sup>	'sal <sup>4</sup> (rock)
hard	keel <sup>6</sup>	kel <sup>6</sup> (iron)
to fly	bil <sup>1</sup>	po'l <sup>4</sup>

Another interesting question is Number 12, "How much linguistic validity is

there for the well-known language names in the Tai family?" Here Gedney remarks on the fact that while in some languages such as White Tai and Black Tai, speakers may give examples of differences between their languages, in the case of other languages like Lue and Shan, or Nung and Thô, the ethnonyms are not linguistically so well defined. Of course we must always sort out who calls himself what, and the possibility of inside/outside appellations, but even within Black Tai there are two very distinct linguistic groups, and under the ethnonym of Nho (Yo), I know of at least three, one spoken in Sakon Nakhon Province which has a tone system like Lao; another spoken in Nakhon Phanom and Khammouan which is similar to Phuan, Neua and Phou Thay; and a third referred to by Robequain in 1929 spoken in Thanh Hóa, where the word for 'fire' is pronounced /fii/ as if it were a Northern Branch language. Thus, the matter of ethnonyms should be of genuine interest in comparative Tai studies if linguistic data are to be reconciled with history.

Yet another question posed, Number 11, is, "What are the most serious gaps in our data?" Geographically, Gedney points to the areas where Lue is spoken, since there is as yet no published Lue dictionary, and the gap between the Sip Song Chou Tai region of northern Vietnam and the eastern Sino-Vietnamese frontier near Cao Bang and Lang So'n from which data are still scarce. It is worth mentioning here that the area where Saek is spoken in Khammouan Province is not mentioned, a bewildering omission since this seemingly out-of-place Northern Branch language may yet hold the key to much Tai prehistory or historical inference. Also in this section, Gedney justifiably laments the fact that so few linguists are engaged in fieldwork, preferring rather to produce more publishable and academically fashionable papers. These remarks are especially poignant for those of us who as students of Gedney were exposed to the enormous quantity of his fieldnotes, work which he was fond of saying was too voluminous for him to analyze in his lifetime and for the contribution of which he would probably be better remembered than for any other.

These comments on "Future Directions" have not focused on some of the

more basic areas of the reconstruction of Proto-Tai. This is simply because these issues, in order to be meaningful, would be best approached in relation to a more comprehensive discourse which includes the work of other scholars, in particular Li Fang Kuei and André Haudricourt, and is beyond the scope of this review. In good Gedneyan tradition, I will suggest that this task of comparison become the work of future analysis.

The second piece which I have termed didactic describes the Proto-Tai tone system and lists a number of common lexical items which may be used to elicit the tone systems of any Tai dialect. This is a practical paper, a tool for field workers, and exemplifies the pragmatic and common sense aspect of Gedney's personality which has made him so valuable as a teacher. In my own studies I have always reversed the order of the D tone subcategories, so that the DL column, consisting of tones on long vowels and final stops, comes before the DS column for tones on syllables with short vowels and final stops. This seems more logical to me because in my opinion the DL tones figure more prominently in overall tonal patterning. My Lanxangian bias is exposed here too, since the C and DL columns fall together in Lao. (Marvin Brown in 1965 was even more radical because he put the DL column between the B and C columns due to the coalescence of B and DL in so many other Tai dialects. And to confuse matters even further, Chinese linguists place what corresponds to Tai C in the B column and call it B.)

Two of the papers describe the Northern Branch languages of Saek and Yay. Although both adhere to the same design of phonological description and then classification of the dialect into the Tai scheme via comparison with extant historical linguistic analyses by Li and Haudricourt, in the Saek article Gedney can scarcely conceal his enthusiasm at having brought to light this most important Tai language. The paper abounds with attestations to Saek's uniqueness, and with the characteristic suggestions for further study, most of which have regrettably never been done. The dictionary and texts he speaks of were never published, although I have been led to believe that these may be forthcoming. And, while we are deploring

this lack, we should note as well the dearth of comparable descriptive publications on the Central dialects of Western Nung, Lung Ming, Lei Ping, and others which Gedney utilizes as examples throughout the volume. In spite of the fact that this deficiency may be largely the fault of Gedney himself, the editors should have seen fit to include his very interesting paper on the dialect of Ning Ming. This might have replaced, for instance, the more mundane and dataless piece on "Special Vocabularies in Thai," directed at lexicographers and dealing with the much-studied phenomena of royal vocabulary, the inclusion of which along with the other more substantive papers is questionable.

The longer data-oriented articles on the Tai languages of Nüa (spoken to the north of the Sip Song Pan Na in Yunnan), and White, Black and Red Tai of northern Vietnam, are vintage Gedney. In their copious volume, lexicography, and attention to detail they serve to illustrate Gedney's consummate skill as a field worker, and his indefatigable perseverance in obtaining maximum quantities of consistent data. Once again, we can only hope that more of the materials recorded by Gedney on the lesser-known Tai languages will be made available soon.

Perhaps Gedney's most daring diachronic analytical contribution to the field of Comparative Tai is his paper entitled, "Evidence for another series of voiced initials in Proto-Tai." Basing his evidence on tonal discrepancies between the Northern and Southern branches which indicate a conflict between original voiced and voiceless initials which would have to be reconstructed as variants, Gedney proposes the addition of six new voiced consonants to the Proto-Tai consonant inventory. The reconstruction is carried out with great care and precision and if we accept his premises there would be little doubt that Proto-Tai did indeed possess this extra series.

I see only two weaknesses which should be investigated further before accepting the hypothesis, and even these do not necessarily rule out the proposal. The first Gedney notes himself, that there are so few examples of the discrepancies from which to work. The second is Gedney's claim that "some, but by no means all" of the forms are found in

Chinese as well, whereas I find that practically all of them, at least 80 per cent, do occur in Chinese. Furthermore, the Chinese items are almost all voiced, and occur with the correct tone category, that is they agree with the Northern branch of Tai. Whether or not the examples offered represent lexical borrowing in one direction or the other, now it remains to be explained why the Chinese forms are so regular in their agreement with Northern Tai while the more closely related Kam-Sui cognates are not. Take, for example, the new series initial \*D (p. 241-44), where some study of Karlgren's (1923) Middle Chinese reconstructions provides reasonably unambiguous forms for 13 of the 15 examples provided for Tai. Most of the Chinese forms begin with initial voiced palatals. One, the word for 'forest, wild' (Siamese /thian<sup>2</sup>/) could not be identified in Karlgren (although it seems to be an Austronesian word), and another, the word for 'cup, bowl' (Siamese /thuay<sup>3</sup>/) could not be clearly identified. The rest are as follows (only a NT form will be provided):

1. 'arrive, reach' NT: Yay /tang<sup>4</sup>/; MC 999 \*, z'jäng <d'- (A) 'to complete or accomplish.' (Proto Kam-Sui \*tang (A))
2. 'pond' NT: Yay /tam<sup>4</sup>/; MC 973 \*, d'äng (A). (Note also MC 1028 \*, dz'iam (A) 'ford a stream; lie at bottom of water.') (Proto Kam-Sui \*thlam (A))
3. 'to hold, carry' NT: Yay /tiii<sup>4</sup>/; MC 952 \*, d'â or d'â (A, C). (Ai Cham /du A voiceless/)
4. 'sugar' NT: Yay /tiang<sup>4</sup>/; MC 973 \*, d'äng (A). (Ai Cham /tong B voiced/)
5. 'line, row, strip' NT: Po-ai /teew<sup>2</sup>/; MC 257 \*, d'ieu (A) 'a strip.' (Sui /tjeu A voiced/)
6. 'field hut' NT: Dioi /tiang<sup>2</sup>/; MC 1003 \*, d'ieŋ (A) 'house, mansion.' Or MC 999 \*, d'ieŋ (A) 'shed, pavilion, kiosk, halting place along the way.' (not found in Kam-Sui)
7. 'bean' NT: Po-ai /tuu<sup>6</sup>/; MC 1015 \*, d'au' (B). (Ai Cham /thau C voiceless/)
8. 'closely spaced, densely packed' NT: Yay /tii<sup>5</sup>/; MC 1214a \*d'i' (B). (not found in Kam-Sui)
9. 'chopsticks' NT: Yay /tiii<sup>5</sup>/; MC 1187 \*, d'iu'o <d' - (tone not given). (Sui /tsu B voiced/)

10. 'to weight or weight down' NT: Yay /tuang<sup>2</sup>/; MC 1270 \*d'q'wong' (A,B) 'heavy.' (not found in Kam-Sui)

11. 'to flood' NT: Po-ai /tum<sup>6</sup>/ (B), Yay /tum<sup>5</sup>/and/tum<sup>6</sup>/ (B and C); MC 1081 \*tsiam' (B) (Gedney notes confusion on tones for this particular item. The Chinese form here is voiceless.) (Be /tSam B or C voiceless/ - Hansell (1988 : 278) notes that this initial affricate occurs mainly in Chinese loans.)

12. 'young male (animal)' NT: Yay /tak' /; MC 811 \*d'ak 'bull, sacrificial animal.' (Ai Cham /tak D voiced/)

13. 'hit, correct,' NT: Yay /tik' /; MC 865 \*d'z' 'ia' < d' '-g or \*d'z' 'iäk < d' '-or \*iak < d- 'hit.' (Be /hak D voiced/) [The Kam-Sui and Be forms cited here are taken from Edmondson and Solnit 1988; cf. the review in this *Journal*.]

It may well be true, therefore, that while the internal evidence for the extra series of initials is compelling, Tai linguists have carried their conservatism too far in failing to account for the large number of Chinese shared lexical items at the level of Proto-Tai.

Other diachronic analyses in the collection are "A spectrum of phonological features in Tai," which is an excellent introduction to comparative Tai phonology; "Speculations on the origins of early Tai tones," a paper that discusses laryngeal features frequently associated with certain tone classes; "A puzzle in comparative Tai phonology," treating the curious diphthongization which crops up sporadically in Tai dialects; "On the Thai evidence for Austro-Thai," a very witty critique of Benedict's methodology in reconstructing Proto-Austro-Thai; and "A Siamese innovation," which provides an explanation for the Thai word /haa<sup>2</sup>/ 'plague, cholera, epidemic,' a word that has the wrong initial consonant and tone. Consistent with the rest of the volume, in these articles the reader is treated to a feast of information on Tai languages and the field of historical Tai linguistics.

The final paper presented in the selection diverges sharply from the rest by entering into the realm of Thai literature. "Siamese verse forms in historical perspective" describes in some detail the poetic and metrical structure of traditional Thai poetry. Several of the forms

were borrowed from Khmer or Sanskrit and Pali. Gedney's description of the forms is informative and intelligible, clarifying many of the ambiguities and paradoxes faced by students of Thai literature, difficulties which are not alluded to in the Thai prescriptive grammars generally cited as source books on the subject. The comparativist can only remark on the sad incongruity that Gedney, who spent so many years researching the Thai classics, did not seek to contribute more to the literary discipline, and that during the course of his fieldwork did not attempt to sort out what common poetical traits, if any, exist among the many Tai dialects he studied in otherwise such great detail. This lack can only be attributed, I fear, to the pervasive force of anti-aesthetic bias in Western science, and thus we might feel comforted that in this regard Gedney has done more than most linguists of the American tradition.

*Selected Papers on Comparative Tai Studies* will now take its place alongside of Li's *Handbook* as compulsory reading for students of Tai. Professor Gedney, the editors, and the University of Michigan, are all deserving of the highest praise in making available to us this unique and invaluable collection.

JAMES R. CHAMBERLAIN

c/o *The Siam Society*

#### REFERENCES

- EDMONDSON, J. AND D. SOLNIT. 1988. *Comparative Kadai: Linguistic studies beyond Tai*. Arlington: Summer Institute of Linguistics.
- HANSELL, MARK. 1988. "The relation of Be to Tai: evidence from tones and initials." (in Edmondson and Solnit above)
- KARLGREN, BERNHARD. 1923. *Analytic dictionary of Chinese and Sino-Japanese*. New York: Dover (reprinted 1974).
- NEW TRIBES MISSION. No date. No title (So dictionary). Mimeo: Kusuman, Sakon Nakhon.
- SOVIET ACADEMY OF SCIENCES. 1986. *Yazyk Lakha*. Moscow: Science Publishers.

*Folk Tales from Kammu - IV: A Master-Teller's Tales*. KRISTINA LINDELL, JON-ÖJVIND SWAHN, and DAMRONG TAYANIN. Scandinavian Institute of Asian Studies Monograph Series No 56. London: Curzon Press. 1989. 229 pp.

This is the latest in a series of publications presenting the oral literature of the Khmu (phonetically [k<sup>a</sup>mhu?]) phonemicized as /kammu/by the editors), a minority Austroasiatic group inhabiting the upland areas of northern Laos, northwestern Vietnam, and a few localities in Nan, Phayao, and Chiang Rai provinces in northern Thailand. It is generally acknowledged that the Khmu settled in northern Laos before the arrival of the Tai-speaking Lao although the precise details of this settlement are not well understood at the present time. Spread out as they are over northern Indochina, and given their priorness, the Khmu hold the key to a great many historical, linguistic and ethnological puzzles which have not yet been solved due, at least in part, to the absence of written records. The present volume and those that have preceded it have made good progress in filling in some of these gaps in our knowledge, particularly in the domain of folklore.

All of the volumes in this series consist of careful English translations of Khmu folktales as they have been related to the editors during the course of their research by Khmu tellers who specialize in their recitation. Each volume represents a part of the repertoire of a different teller, and we are thus treated to a great diversity of individual style as well as subject matter of the tales. The raconteur in Volume IV is Duang Seng, a "master-teller" whose skill comes through well in the translations, and is descriptively analyzed in the introduction where the editors set forth the characteristics of a good storyteller.

The present volume, however, diverges from the rest by furnishing, in addition to the English translation, the original Khmu transcription for one of

the most important stories in the collection, that of Cheuang. This is a crucial difference and I would implore the editors to continue this trend and provide us with even more of the original language in subsequent publications. For serious students of Southeast Asia in a great many disciplines it is vitally necessary that we have texts in the Khmu language as well as in translation.

The tales found in Volumes III and IV are divided into 17 types, of which types 2, 3, 4, and 7 are represented in Volume IV: Cheuang tales, tales of the clever man, *Ñaar* stories, and tales of wonder respectively. The matter of classification is discussed in Vol III, but the criteria utilized for each category are somewhat vague and perhaps overly reliant on the Stith Thompson Index. It would be refreshing to see a system built up independently and internally from Asian motifs first before being compared to the "universal" one. For example, it seems to me that Buanoy (otherwise known in Laos as Khoun Lou - Nang Oua) belongs to a cycle of myths extant in southern China since at least the Han dynasty, while the Cheuang tales belong to a myth cycle indigenous to Southeast Asia. Both are very ancient and widespread in East and Southeast Asia, and like other tales already classified as myths in Vol III, such as the flood, they are found in more than one ethnolinguistic setting, not confined to Khmu or even to the Austroasiatic family. I would therefore prefer to classify these as myths rather than as other types of tales. Perhaps the editors have in mind a Lévi-Straussian evolution from myth to fiction, or perhaps there is a folklore definition of which we are not informed. This is not clear.

But indeed, this is part of the great pleasure one finds when reading these tales—the recognition of so many common themes and motifs suitable for comparative analysis, helping to piece together the multi-ethnic mythological puzzles that abound in Southeast Asia. The story of Buanoy is a good case in point. Although the editors have chosen to regard it as a variation of the swan maiden tales, it has closer relations with

the cycle of myths known as The Cowherd and the Weaver-girl (Lévy 1984), myths of the origins of silk production which I have related to the Khoun Lou - Nang Oua legends found among the Tai speakers of Laos, the Sip Song Chou Tai, and northeastern Thailand (1984). But in addition, the second half of the tale, after the two lovers have ascended to heaven, resembles more closely the Hmong tales of Niam Nkauj Zuag Paj (cf. Johnson 1985).

The correspondences with the Lao versions are fascinating, both for the common motifs and for the common style of presentation. Common motifs, for example, would include: riding horses, the suicide on the *figus* tree (a Southeast Asian counterpart of the Chinese mulberry which is associated with human sacrifice which becomes the cinnamon in Lao probably through a semantic and phonological shift from Chinese /sang/ to Lao /cuang/), the crow and the cock (the Chinese black sun-bird, a role played by either the cock or the raven, cf. Chamberlain 1989), Khoun Lou's being the only one able to recover the body, Khoun Lou's suicide while the mother is under the house, Khoun Lou's blood which is equivalent to the mother's red silk dye in the Lao version, the flute (here the Lao versions, such as the one recorded by Charuwan (2522), as in several places throughout the Lao and Khmu versions, employs stock rhymed passages, such as:

nOOng<sup>2</sup> pay kOOn<sup>1</sup> si? aw pii kap  
khEEEn

?aay pay lun Hai? aw VEEn kap  
cOOng

pay? ee<sup>2</sup> ñOO<sup>2</sup> ?ee<sup>2</sup> ñOOng<sup>2</sup> Thèng  
faa<sup>2</sup> maay<sup>1</sup> kan

"If (I) go first I'll take a flute and pipes,

If you go after take a mirror and parasol [sometimes comb and hair ornaments],

So that our praises will be sung in the sky."),

the bananas, Khoun Lou's spotted clothing in the Khmu version which is equivalent to the mother's spotted silk

dye in the Lao version (caused by Khoun Lou's death throes), and the spinning of the thread to return from heaven to earth which is equivalent to the silk thread in the Lao version by which Nang Oua hangs herself. As Lévy (1984 : 120) remarks, "Weaving is the result of the separation of heaven and earth. . ."

The Cheuang tale presented here is equally as engrossing for Southeast Asianists both for its innate value to Khmu studies as well as its contribution to the rapidly expanding collection of materials of this type. The guise of Cheuang in this particular tale is that of *Ñii Kràan*. The first syllable appears to be the Chinese and Tai alternative word for the number 'two' or 'second.' The name occurs associated with Cheuang in many places such as *Thao Ñii Baa Chiàng*, the title of a manuscript found in Loei Province (Danuphol 2523); *Thao Nhi*, frequently substituted for Cheuang in the Lao epic; or the Khmu leader of the Kha rebellion in Houa Phan and Thanh Hoá provinces who styled himself *Phagna Thao Nhi* (Robequain 1929). Elsewhere, Cheuang is the last child, as in the Black Tai chronicles and in the Luang Prabang version called *Nithan Praya Cu'ong Lun*. I suspect that this may imply an ancient system of kingship or leadership based on secundo- or ultimogeniture, perhaps due to the practice of firstling sacrifice like that described by Eberhard (1967 : 134-9). This practice occurred, Eberhard suggests, especially in the ancient state of Ch'u because the northern Chinese laws did not recognize southern marriage customs where the first-born child was not usually the offspring of the husband. And thus the rebellious connotations of Cheuang may be due in part to such north-south conflicts.

The second syllable of the name, *Kràan*, like the Lao word, means 'lazy,' apparently to distinguish it from other Cheuang tales originating from a separate traditional context.

A similar tale translated by Ferlus (1979) was told by a Khmu man from the district of Muang Khoa on the upper Ou river in southern Phongsaly Province. There is thus ample material

now for a close comparative study of the two versions, which differ considerably.

Many of the details in this tale are ripe for interpretation. For example, Ay Khun Luu is probably not a historical figure as suggested on page 34, but rather represents a confusion of old mythological traditions between Khoun Lou-Nang Oua (Buanoy in the present volume) and Cheuang. A reverse instance of this occurs in the Lao epic where one of Cheuang's wives is named Nang Oua. Outside the context of these two traditions, the names do not occur in Laos, but the best illustration of the confusion is in the Meuang story called 'The Flowery Garden of the Mountain of Death,' where the Meuang character is called "Ong Cun Chuong Ly Wi Thang" (cf. Nguyen Tu Chi 1971). Furthermore, the flower motif calls to mind the orchids of the Kam Meuang (Lanna) version presented in Archaimbault (1961) or the Cantonese Golden Orchid Clubs for girls who refused to marry and committed suicide if they were forced (Eberhard 136).

Other interesting information is provided in great profusion: how the bamboo rat got his puffy eyes from crying for his jew's harp; how dragons arise from the mixing of horse and elephant urines (the horse is a Chinese motif while the elephant is Southeast Asian); and how Cheuang's magic knife was transformed into his famous sword after his angry mother "put it in her arse and whirled it in the direction of the rising sun" [although it is not clear from the English translation whether the whirling was performed before or after the knife is withdrawn from her arse, the Khmu original text implies (fortunately) the latter].

It is not clear whether the so-called historical section of the tale is part of the original or was a recent addition inspired by the Lao versions. In both the present tale and in the version recorded by Ferlus, Cheuang becomes the lord of the realm, but the enemies are identified only in the Ferlus version where they are called the army of "Blind Keos" (Vietnamese). Another feature of the Ferlus version, not occurring elsewhere so far

as I know, is the theme of the gibbons cutting down the banyan in heaven, similar to the creation myths of the Tais in Vietnam but without the gibbons, that is, world-tree myths frequently combined with grain origin myths, but in Formosa, the Philippines, and Indonesia, associated with the origin of monkeys (cf. Lévy 124-128). Origin myths are also regularly linked with Austroasiatic Cheuangs as well like the tale of the Stieng (Chamberlain 1986), elements of which are found in the Cheuang of the present volume when the magic knife-cum-sword cuts down all of the trees, clearing the area like a swidden field, or when Cheuang establishes his domain by cutting up the serpent.

While reiterating the need for the inclusion of the original Khmu texts as well as the translations, it must be concluded that the SIAS series on Khmu oral literature is of enormous value to the study of all aspects of Southeast Asia, not only for their insights into Khmu language and culture and to the field of folklore generally, but because the Khmu, ranging over so much of the northern mainland, have become a repository for much that has been lost or ignored in other literate cultures. We are greatly indebted to the editors of this series for their perseverance in continuing to make this information available.

JAMES R. CHAMBERLAIN

*c/o The Siam Society*

#### REFERENCES

- ARCHAIMBAULT, CHARLES. 1961. Le cycle de Nang Oua-Nang Malong et son substrat sociologique. *France-Asie* 170. nov-dec.
- CHAMBERLAIN, JAMES R. 1984. The god of spring and the mulberry girl. *Srinakharinwirot Journal, Mahasarakham* 3.2.111-145.
- \_\_\_\_\_. 1986. Remarks on the origins of Thao Hung or Cheuang, in *Papers from a conference on Thai studies in honor of William J. Gedney*, eds. Robert

Bickner, Thomas Hudak, and Pacharin Peyasantiwong. Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Michigan.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1989. Heavenly Questions. *Documents for the conference on Tai folklore*. Chulalongkorn University, Thai Studies Institute.

CHARUVAN THAMMAVATR. 2522. *vi? khro? nithaan chaaw baan ?iisaan caak saam muu baan*. Srinakharinwirot University, Mahasarakham.

DANUPHOL CHAYASIND and THONG-SUK CHARUMETHICHON. 2523. *thaaw n̄ii baa ciang*. Loei Teacher Training College.

EBERHARD, WOLFRAM. 1968. *The local cultures of south and east China*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

FERLUS, MICHEL. 1979. Le récit Khamou de Chuang et ses implications historiques pour le Nord-Laos. *Asie du Sud-Est et Monde Insulinien* X. 2-4. 327-365.

LÉVY, JEAN. 1984. Dong Yong le fils pieux et le mythe formosan de l'origine des singes. *Journal Asiatique* CCLXXII. 1-2. 83-132.

NGUYENTU CHI. 1971. Croquis Muong. *Etudes Vietnamiennes* 7.32.55-161.

ROBEQUAIN, CHARLES. 1929. *Le Thanh Hoá*. 2 vols. Publications de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient, no. 23. Paris, Brussels: L'École Française.

#### *Comparative Kadai: Linguistic Studies Beyond Tai*. Eds.

JEROLD A. EDMONDSON and DAVID B. SOLNIT. Summer Institute of Linguistics and The University of Texas at Arlington. 1988. 374 pp.

For those readers unfamiliar with the various proposals concerning the wider genetic affiliations of the Tai linguistic family, the title of this book will appear enigmatic. In fact, the term *Kadai* has been around since the early 1940's when Paul Benedict first applied it to include a group of lesser-known languages widely separated from each other in the southern Chinese provinces of Guizhou, Guangxi, and Hainan, and in

northern Vietnam. According to the editors' introduction, this volume of collected papers is the result of a project to publish linguistic studies on the Kam-Sui languages, information on which is becoming more readily available due to the efforts of Chinese scholars and outside linguists being allowed to carry out research in the PRC.

As the papers included focus primarily on the Kam-Sui languages, the title of the publication is slightly deceptive for those of us who hoped to see more data revealed on the lesser-known languages of Gelao, Lati, Laqua, and Laha (these last two, lumped together by the editors, I prefer to keep separate until seeing more evidence since the geographical locations are quite distinct). One paper does treat in considerable detail the dialects of Li (called Hlai in this volume), but the lack of inclusion of Gelao, for which Chinese sources are available (1983), or Laha, which has been studied by Soviet linguists (1986), is disappointing. It also tends to invalidate the editors' attempts to redefine the term *Kadai* since the same gaps in data still exist in this volume. The proposed circumlocution of 'extra-Tai Kadai' which is broken down into Kam-Sui and 'others,' is awkward and confusing, and until conclusive evidence is forthcoming, it is less ambiguous to continue to refer to Li, Laha, Laqua, Lati, and Gelao as Kadai, and the hypothetical broader grouping as *Tai-Kadai*.

Other obstacles in the form of suggested usage are likewise planted throughout the introduction in an apparent attempt to establish formalisms where none are called for. The substitution of Han for Chinese, especially in diachronically oriented studies, is immediately ambiguous with the Han dynasty. (The Chinese of the Han period would, I assume, become the Han Han.) In a perverse rearrangement of

the Proto-Tai tonal categories from ABC to ACB, the editors have sought to place the Tai and Kam-Sui languages into the Chinese frame of reference rather than that of Tai. This not only reeks of Chinese chauvinism and calls to mind earlier distinctions between Chinese and barbarian, it will no doubt rankle the majority readership whose orientation will be mainly Tai because it violates the integrity of a long-established and accepted tradition set up by Li Fang Kuei, the pioneer in the study of the relationship between Kam-Sui and Tai, to whom, ironically, the volume is dedicated. This is not to say that some regularization of the tonal recording is not desirable, only that the regularization should have been in the direction of Tai, not Chinese. In promulgating this superficial Sinicization, the editors have perpetrated their own miniature cultural revolution, seeking, no doubt, the domestication of the unruly south, and since publications of this kind appear so rarely its effects will surely remain with us for a long time to come.

Irksome as these aspects of the publication may be, however, it nevertheless contains much that is of value, particularly in the Chinese articles made available to non-Chinese readers, and in the diachronic analyses offered which treat reconstruction and classification. Also, the maps showing the locations of the languages mentioned in the southern Chinese provinces of Guizhou, Guangxi, Hunan and Hainan are carefully drawn and extremely useful.

The Chinese articles are particularly interesting for the new data which they present. Shi and Cui's study of the hitherto unrecorded Ai-Cham confirms that this language is a Kam-Sui dialect most closely related to Mak as was suggested by Li Fang Kuei in 1943. Other Chinese contributions include papers on Kam, Mak, Mulam and Kam-Sui generally.

Classification of the Kam-Sui languages and the relative positions of Lakkia and Be are addressed in several articles in the volume as well. The conclusion, based mainly on lexical evidence, is that Be is closer to Tai (Hansell), while Lakkia is closer to Kam-Sui (Solnit), although Thurgood's study places Be apart from both Kam-Sui and Tai.

Only the paper by Matisoff on the reconstruction of Proto-Hlai (Li) tones and initial consonants concerns true Kadai dialects, that is, those languages most remote from Tai or Kam-Sui. Nine Hlai dialects are included from the work of Ouyang Jueya and Zheng Yiqing. A first look at the reconstructed initials reminds one of Miao-Yao with its prenasalization and lack of voiced stops. However, despite the rather erratic inclusion of the relevant Tai forms which wanes as we work through the text, or the confusion of Siamese 'sky-cock' ('heavenly chicken') with Hlai 'pheasant' on p. 294, the proximity to Tai revealed here is remarkable.

The volume concludes with a final comment, "Kadai Linguistics: the Rules of Engagement," by Paul Benedict, providing guidelines and words of caution to those who would wish to become involved in this hazardous field.

Thus, although the overly Sinicized editing of this book is regrettable, it must ultimately be judged a valuable contribution to the field of Tai-Kadai linguistics and to the realm of Southeast Asian studies generally.

JAMES R. CHAMBERLAIN

*c/o The Siam Society*